

ventive, and not of much use as a palliative. That such should still be the state of matters in reference to the modern forms of plague and pestilence which periodically visit this country, is a deeper disgrace to the present generation than the older forms of these epidemics were to those by whose comparative ignorance, and by whose sad experience, the present generation ought to have profited, as well as by its own not much less fatal neglect of recent years. It ill becomes us who dwell in towns whose subsoil is saturated with those abominations which of old were cast into the streets to be evaporated by winds and washed away by rains, to revert with inconsistent horror to ancient practices only a little more openly, but not a whit more essentially noxious and filthy than our own. The substitution of cesspools below our dwellings for dunghills before or behind them may have been an improvement in the time of a past generation, ere the soil was saturated with the contents of these pits of corruption; but that time is passed, and the period of plague and pestilence is again at hand. The deadly cholera can scarcely be called a mere precursor of these terrible death dealers: it is the resurrected pestilence itself which is gathering strength as the interval of comparative cleanliness, under the now exhausted cesspool system, has expired. There is now as pressing a necessity to supersede that system by complete and thorough drainage, as there ever was to originate it in the dunghill days of plague and pestilence.

Miscellaneous.

BRILLIANT CONDITION OF THE INDIA HOUSE.—The papers in the *Art Journal* on the "Embellishment of Public Buildings," to which we have referred, are continued in the present number. We quote some remarks on the condition of the India House, Leadenhall-street,—the seat of government of millions of people. "Except in the Court of Directors, there is no decoration in colour which will call for the slightest remark; but every part of the walls is fringed with dirt and dust, almost sufficient to justify a suspicion that neither paint nor simple soap and water were appliances within the knowledge of the company. For an eastern potentate to omit his ablutions would be scarcely more extraordinary than the way in which these homely expedients are misused or neglected in our public buildings. We had found ourselves, in other cases, really compelled, for the proper treatment of the subject, as regards painting and sculpture, to enter into the preliminary question of appropriate structure, and we must now, forsooth, descend even to these details of the bucket and mop. It should not be necessary to say, that no building or apartment can have its proper effect, or is fit for the reception of works of art, unless it be at least clean. We generally find that the desire for cleanliness is dormant, until it runs into the extreme of allowing all the beauty of mouldings and ornaments to be destroyed by paint or whitewash. All, however, that is in general necessary or desirable is the timely and regular use of the more vulgar expedient, and this we seriously counsel the Court of Directors to try the effect of." We were surprised to find the intelligent writer seriously discussing Mr. Ruskin's amusing dictum against the decoration of buildings or things belonging to purposes of active and occupied life.

RESTORATIONS IN ELY CATHEDRAL.—A statement recently put forth shows that,— "The subscriptions realised have amounted to about 7,000*l.* of which 3,150*l.* was given by the bishop of the diocese, the canons, and other members of the Church. The expenditure upon the works of the new choir, without including large sums expended before the subscription list was formally opened, have exceeded 9,000*l.* About 1,500*l.* more will be required to complete the altar steps and pavement, the wings and other portions of the altar-screen not included in Mr. Gardner's noble gift, and in the restoration of the monuments for the inclosure of the choir." As a guide to those who may wish to undertake

specific works, the following rough estimate of the expense of executing some of them is given:—"The single figures on the screen, about 10*l.* each; the groups beneath the canopies of the upper stalls, about 30*l.* each; the groups on the bench ends of the sub-stalls, about 40*l.* each; the complete restoration and decoration of the great shrine canopy, formerly placed upon the tomb of Bishop Hotham,—as the workmanship of this canopy is of the most elaborate description, the entire cost of its restoration would not be less than 250*l.*; the painting and gilding of the bosses of the side aisles of the choir, about 25*l.* for each aisle; the pavement of the side aisles of the choir and the retrochoir, with encaustic tiles, about 60*l.* for each of them,—if marble be extensively employed, as in the interior of the choir, the cost will be much greater; the decorations of the vault of the lantern, about 350*l.*; the eight new windows in the lantern, about 30*l.* for each of them; the turrets and pinnacles of the outer corona, about 100*l.* each; the painting the vault of St. Catherine's Chapel, about 50*l.*; the painting the roof of the south-west transept, about 150*l.*; the painting and decoration of the north, in the same style as that of the south transept, the repairs of the woodwork and carving not included, about 100*l.*"

IMPROVEMENT OF LAND—SEWAOK.—The attention of some thinking men is beginning to be directed to the expediency and the practicability of diverting the sewage of towns and cities from rivers, into which it now runs to waste, through channels leading to reservoirs in which it may be received for use in agriculture. Of all measures which powerful influence can effect, there is, I believe, not one so beneficial to the country and mankind as this. As the benefits which it must confer, in increasing, every year, the "kindly fruits of the earth," will arise peculiarly from that profession of which you are the organ, may I hope that your pen will be used to draw to the subject the attention of scientific minds? I learn, though I have no professional knowledge on the question, that in this city, Bristol, the annual returns from such an operation would be from thirty to thirty-five per cent. on the outlay. And as Bristol, having three streams on each of which channels must be made on both sides of the water, will require a much greater outlay than other towns (of the same population), which generally have only one running stream,—if the rough estimate which I give be something near the mark,—the case claims, as a source of revenue, the immediate attention of all municipal corporations.—AN ACCOUNTANT.

PULSATIONS FROM UNEQUAL EXPANSION OF MATERIAL IN A "HAUNTED" HOUSE AT HULL.—Certain mysterious knockings in a house in a retired lane leading from the Aulaby-road, having excited great commotion and terror amongst superstitious people about Hull, and attracted the attention and investigation of the police, who appear to have been satisfied that they arose from something else than trickery, the premises were examined by Mr. Sollitt, who thus gives his views of the matter:—"The two ends of the house consist of brick walls four-and-a-half inches thick, with inch deals running the whole length of the wall at every nine or ten courses of bricks. The insides of these walls are stoothed from top to bottom, the uprights of the stoothing being nailed to the whole of the horizontal deals in the walls. Now, these thin walls, together with the deals between them, have had a thorough drying through the long hot and arid season, and now that the damp weather has returned the whole are swollen out, and consequently become too high for the uprights of the stoothing, which, of course, do not become elongated by the moisture, as wood is only expanded by moisture across the grain and not in length. As the whole are firmly fastened together, this unequal expansion produces a kind of pulsation or beating, which is greater or less in proportion to the quantity of the contrary expansions or opposing effects of the uprights to the expansion of the walls. The effect is always strongest after the passing of a railway train, which shakes the various parts and sets them in motion. The beating,

likewise, often commences after the shutting of the front door of the house. The effects are considerably increased from the fact that the stoothed walls are covered with paper, and therefore perform the part of a large tambourine, in increasing the sound, and thus rendering it, in many cases, as is stated by some parties, *really fearful*." The noises, Mr. Sollitt thinks, "might be prevented either by covering the ends of the house with a good coat of Roman cement, or by other houses being built on each side of the dwelling; for either plan would defend the house from the effects of moisture, and effectually keep out the dreadful intruder."

THE LATE MR. GEO. BUCHANAN, C.E.—The *Scottsman*, in a notice of the death of this gentleman, states that he was about sixty years of age; that he commenced business about 1812 as a land surveyor, but his strong scientific bent in a few years led him to devote himself to the more interesting and elevated vocation of a civil engineer. In this capacity, continues our authority, he was engaged on several public works of importance, harbours, bridges, &c. These brought him into notice, and in 1822 the directors of the School of Arts solicited him to deliver the course of lectures on Mechanical Philosophy, which he did. At an after period he lectured for one or two sessions on Natural Philosophy, and was very popular and lucid in his style; but his increasing engagements as a civil engineer compelled him to abandon the lecture-room. He appears to have been much consulted by the Lord Justice Clerk, the Dean of Faculties, and others, in law disputes as to river and estuary limits in salmon fishing. The sheriff of Edinburgh selected him to superintend the formation of the dangerous tunnelling beneath the new town of Edinburgh, for the Granton railway. Mr. Buchanan was a member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and during the session of 1847-48 he was elected president of the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, to the transactions of which body, along with his friend Mr. Grainger, he was a constant contributor. Mr. Buchanan was brother-in-law to Mr. Faraday.

NEW ROYAL PARK FOR FINSBURY.—On Wednesday evening last a public meeting, very numerously attended, was held at Highbury Barn Tavern, London, to consider what measures should be adopted to urge upon the Government the necessity of securing the ground already surveyed for this object. The chair was taken by the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor, M.P. Amongst the speakers were Sir James Duke, M.P. Mr. Lloyd, the original projector and indefatigable promoter of the park, Mr. Charles Pearson, and Mr. Charles Woodward, F.R.S. all of whom advocated the advantages of a park in this locality with very great warmth, and viewed it as a demand which the borough of Finsbury had a right to expect. It was resolved and carried unanimously that a deputation wait upon the Premier for consent to bring in the Bill, and urging upon him the necessity of renewing the notices immediately to prevent another year's delay. A map was shown to the meeting, prepared by Mr. Barnett, indicating the situation of the park relative to those already made.

MEMORIALS OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.—The inhabitants of Liverpool have passed a resolution to erect a column surmounted by a statue of the Duke on some suitable site to be granted by the council. The site of Old Islington Market is named as the probable site; and 20,000*l.* has been spoken of as the sum requisite.—The obelisk erected on a hill near Wellington, in Somerset, has been examined by Mr. Paul, of Taunton, architect, and is reported by him to be badly built, and so dilapidated as to endanger its stability. Some of the plinth has already fallen. A subscription has been opened for its repair, and it is proposed to carry out the original design of placing a bronze statue of the Duke on the top, and erecting a building for three military pensioners to take charge of the monument.—It has been resolved at a public meeting held in Norwich, to erect a statue of the Duke in that city. A considerable sum has already been collected.